(ix) Facilities by way of eco-testing laboratories have been created to epable exporters to get the garments/textiles pre-tested for conforming to the requirements of importing countries.

Priority to handloom weaving industry

915. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONY:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether handicrafts and handloom weaving industry occupied a central place in national development policy about 20 years ago;

(b) whether recently economic reforms have made this sector weak and it has been totally ignored;

(c) whether only 7000 crores had been advanced to this industry in last five years as against the target of Rs. 25,000 crores; and

(d) whether Government propose to give preference to this sector?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The budgetary provision in the handicrafts and handloom sector has increased from the level of Rs. 315.00 crores and 452.50 crores respectively during the 9th Plan to Rs. 425.00 crores and 625.00 crores respectively during 10th Plan.

(d) Yes Sir. Under the National Common Minimum Programme handicrafts and handloom sectors have been iaentified as one of the important sectors for increasing employment opportunities.

Export of handicrafts

†916. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the status of export of handicrafts during the last three years;

(b) whether it is a fact that export of handicrafts has increased during the current year; and

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.